U.P., with the co-operation of a Russian Expert Team;

(b) whether this team has succeded in discovering oil and gas; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir. ONGC is currently not exploring for hydrocarbons in Tanakpur district in U.P.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

LPG Distributorship at Safakadal in Jammu and Kashmir

1984. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a request for grant of LPG distributorship at Safakadal (Down Town) in J&K has been received by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas;

(b) whether it is fact that the J&K Government has recommended grant of distributorship;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is sufficient density of population at Safakadal, warranting necessity of granting distributorship there; and

(d) if so, whether Government are reconsidering the above request, in view of the special situation prevailing in J&K, following the elections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) It has been reported that Safakadal is a location of Srinagar Municipal Town. There are 16 LPG distributors presently in operation at Srinagar. 7 distributorships are also feeding Safakadal area. In additon, two more distributorships have been included in the LPG Marketing Plan 1994-96 for Srinagar. More LPG distributorships if found necessary and viable, are to be included in the new Marketing Plan 1996-98, under preparation. These distributors will meet the normal demand of Srinagar town and Safakadal area.

Target for New Domestic LPG Connections

1985. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set any targets for new domestic LPG connections for the years 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof, with particular reference to Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the steps taken to achieve the targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Government has approved release of 20 lakh new LPG connections in the country during the year 1996-97. New LPG enrolment plan for the year 1997-98 is under finalisation. Targets for release of new connections are not fixed statewise, but releases are made on the basis of viability level and slack available with distributors.

(c) To achieve the target during 1996-97, Oil Companies have taken steps to augment LPG production from indigenous sources and maximise LPG imports through existing facilities at Mumbai, Vizag, Kandla and Mangalore. Action has been taken to augment LPG bottling capacity, LPG movement capacity and procurement of LPG equipmetns etc. for meeting the demand of existing the new customers.